



## Governor's Office for Children and Families

QUARTER 3

FEBRUARY 2012

### Meet Our Staff

Katie Jo Ballard  
*Executive Director*

Cora Alexander  
*Family Support Grants Specialist*

Jo Ann Berry  
*Finance Director*

Dahlia Bell Brown  
*Family Violence Research Analyst*

Thorne Brown  
*Finance Officer*

Robert Clark  
*Juvenile Justice Grants Specialist*

Sarah Dempsey  
*Family Violence Training Specialist*

Hayley Howell  
*Deputy Finance Director*

Heather McDaniel  
*Youth Development Division  
Administrator*

Quincie McKibben  
*Family Violence Grants Specialist*

Frances Milton  
*Finance Officer*

Raelene Noles  
*Youth Development Grants Specialist*

Keith Parkhouse  
*Juvenile Justice Detention Monitor*

Alicia Parks  
*Abstinence Grants Specialist*

Ann Pope  
*Family Violence Grants Specialist*

Danielle Ruedt  
*Family Violence Division  
Administrator*

Helena Schneider  
*Administrative Assistant*

Carole Steele  
*Prevention and Family Support  
Division Administrator*

Joe Vignati  
*Justice Division Administrator*

## Quarterly Newsletter

### ***GOCF Invites You to Connect with Us on Facebook!***

The Governor's Office for Children and Families is excited to announce that we now have a Facebook page! We invite you to stay current on GOCF grant opportunities and awards, training and event announcements, and grantee news. You can also view photos of our most recent community events and trainings.

[Click here to connect with us on Facebook!](#)

### ***Welcome New Family Violence Staff Member!***



GOCF is delighted to welcome staff member, Ann Pope, as our new Family Violence Grants Specialist! Ann brings a wealth of experience to the GOCF team in human service program development, grant administration, training and evaluation. She comes to us from the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services where she served as director of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

### ***GOCF Thanks Interns for Their Dedication and Hard Work!***

The Governor's Office for Children and Families would like to thank our interns for their efforts to assist GOCF in serving Georgia! Each college semester, GOCF enlists the help of students to work directly with staff on state level projects and initiatives, enabling them to gain a unique experience in state government.



Libby Kauss (left), Executive Director, Katie Jo Ballard (middle left), Christian Theis (middle right), Caitlin Costello (right), Tanner Holmes (right photo).



### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

**On Point Training**  
March 28-29, 2012 - Atlanta

### **GOCF Advisory Board Members**

First Lady, Sandra Deal,  
Chair  
Judge Steve Teske,  
Vice Chair

Andy Barclay  
John Bowden  
Gaylyn Cole  
Ken Dobbs  
Rachel Ewald  
Michelle Girtman  
Brittany Jean  
Mika Kawana  
Shaquita Ogletree  
Linda Parker  
Gene Pope  
Dan Provence  
Kathy Schrader  
Michele Smith  
Duane Whitley

*We Unite and Empower Communities So They Can Unite and Empower Families*

## ***First Lady Travels with GOCF to Visit North Georgia Schools***

First Lady Sandra Deal, State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge, and GOCF's Executive Director Katie Jo Ballard traveled to North Georgia Schools on February 13, 2012. Pictured on the right is Mrs. Gray's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class at Demorest Elementary. During the visit, the school was presented with the School of Excellence Award.

To find out where the First Lady and GOCF will visit next, please contact Helena Schneider at [Helena.Schneider@children.ga.gov](mailto:Helena.Schneider@children.ga.gov).



## ***Kids.ga.gov and gocfweb.com Have Migrated to GOCF's Newly Redesigned Website***

Recently, GOCF restructured its website to take a more effective approach in providing communities across the state with easier access to information that highlights its work and resources for grantees and community members. Along with this effort, GOCF also migrated its training website and the Children's Cabinet site within [children.ga.gov](http://children.ga.gov) to optimize ease of access for users that wish to find information on GOCF's other initiatives and activities. [Click here](#) to view GOCF's website or visit [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov).

## ***GOCF Shifts Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Initiatives under its Youth Development Division***

As of January 1, 2012, all CSEC work under the GOCF was transferred to its Youth Development Division. As part of its recent programmatic reorganization, GOCF believes that the tremendous work supported by CSEC funds, activities, and trainings will fit well within the context of the Youth Development Division. Heather McDaniel, GOCF's Administrator for the Youth Development Division, will assume the responsibilities associated with CSEC. Heather brings with her years of experience as Georgia's statewide coordinator for Title V 510 Abstinence Education funds; she has spearheaded a comprehensive approach to youth development that places teens in a position to make advantageous life choices. GOCF is proud to endorse youth development programs that prioritize healthy relationship and marriage education, afterschool advocacy, job preparedness, tutoring and academic achievement, community involvement, financial literacy, and goal-oriented planning.

GOCF looks forward to continued partnerships with CSEC efforts as it moves forward to align its work with the Governor and First Lady's mission and vision for Georgia.

## ***GOCF's Justice Division Releases "Status Offenders in Georgia's Juvenile Justice System" Report***

GOCF commissioned this report in an effort gain a non-biased perspective into the issue of status offenders in Georgia. One of our roles under state statute is to assist in the development of community-based alternatives so that children coming before the juvenile court may not be committed to a state detention facility when it is deemed in their best interest to receive a non-institutional disposition.

Status offenders are youth who have not committed a "crime" under Georgia law. This report points to the possible benefits of alternative interventions for this population which include increased public safety and cost-savings to Georgia's citizens. To access the report, [click here](#) or visit [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov).

## ***Valdosta Women's Shelter Receives Funds Through Community Fundraising Efforts***

Valdosta Services League hosted a fundraiser for The Haven (Battered Women's Shelter, Inc.), a domestic violence shelter that receives funding from GOCF. Due to the fundraiser, the League was able to raise \$22,785 for the Valdosta shelter! Members of The Haven's Board along with its Executive Director, Michelle Girtman, were presented with a check from the League.

**The Haven provides shelter and services for victims of domestic violence. They can be reached at 229-241-7047.**



## ***GOCF Assists Kennesaw State University in Securing a CSEC Pilot Research Grant Award***

In November 2011, a grant application was submitted to the Emory Center for Injury Control (ECIC) for a pilot CSEC research project. The application was submitted through a partnership between Kennesaw State University (KSU), Juvenile Justice Fund (JJF), Division of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) and GOCF. In December, KSU was notified by ECIC that the school would be awarded funding! Grant funds will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of CSEC statewide trainings for DFCS workers. Dr. Jennifer McMahon-Howard from KSU will serve as the Principal Investigator for the project.

## ***GOCF Releases Request for Proposals for its 2012 Juvenile Justice Accountability Block Grant Program***

GOCF recently announced and accepted applications for new projects for its 2012 Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program (JABG). The goal of this funding is to address juvenile crime by encouraging accountability-based reform at the community level.

During this funding cycle, special consideration is being given to projects employing a Juvenile Drug Court model as well as projects serving Department of Juvenile Justice supervised youth who are returning home from secure confinement.

GOCF will announce the new recipients of this grant within the next quarter. Check our homepage at [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov) for the upcoming press release to find out which programs will be funded.

## ***GOCF Community Grant Awards***

GOCF currently provides 128 community-based service grant awards throughout the state of Georgia. A total of \$22,462,708 in grants are awarded to communities to support programs that have a statewide impact on juvenile justice, youth development and abstinence education, family violence, child abuse and neglect prevention, and system-of-care.

### **Continuation Community Grants Awarded**

GOCF awarded seventeen (17) continuation grants to support Caring Community programs. The grant awards total **\$3,191,425** and were given to communities all across Georgia. Their awards began on January 1, 2012.

[Click here to view the Press Release](#)

**To find resources in your community that GOCF funds, please visit the complete list of GOCF's FY2012 grant awards by [clicking here](#) or visit [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov).**

## GOCF Trainings & Conferences

### ***Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's 11th Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Conference Receives Great Reviews from Participants***



Children's Healthcare of Atlanta hosted its 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Conference at the Omni Hotel in the CNN Center October 24-25, 2011. This two-day event had a special focus on the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), and participants were

able to learn about the impact of CSEC in the community and their individual service delivery systems. Over 300 people attended the conference, which included over 20 seminars and workshops that featured experts in the field of child maltreatment and prevention. Overall, 89% of the conference's evaluation respondents reported that their knowledge increased as a direct result of the training. GOCF is proud to partner with Children's Healthcare to offer continuing education opportunities for child care professionals in Georgia.

### **Web-Based Training Sessions for Parents and Service Providers**

GOCF has partnered with Care Solutions, Inc. to provide several online trainings for parents and service providers each quarter! Currently, Care Solutions is offering a total of three web-based trainings that provide participants with important skill sets when caring for children as well as information that relates to child welfare, child and family development, and child care. Participants that take the online trainings are offered CEUs free of charge. To view a list of these trainings and access their registration, [click here](#) or visit GOCF's Prevention & Family Support training page at [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov).

### **Mental Health Training Series on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children**

GOCF is pleased to announce training for mental health providers on the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). This session dispels some of the stereotypes about CSEC victims and covers who is vulnerable to recruitment, pathways to entry, risk factors, and engaging survivors therapeutically. **All training dates offer 6 hours of CEUs approved by NASW-GA LPCAGA and are provided free of charge to participants.**

For dates and registration, [click here](#) or visit the Youth Development training section of GOCF's website at [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov).

### **Online Training Series for Georgia Medical Professionals on CSEC**

This web-based training series is presented by GOCF and The Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's Stephanie V. Blank Center for Safe and Healthy Children. The series aims to educate Georgia medical professionals on the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). The series includes four individual modules on CSEC-related topics which will be presented via live webinars. Each module offers free CEUs to participants. For a training schedule or more information on the webinars and how to access them, send an email to [Jennifer.Felner@choa.org](mailto:Jennifer.Felner@choa.org).

### **On Point Training**

Join On Point for a two day training hosted by the Governor's Office for Children and Families. This training will equip participants with the tools, knowledge, and techniques needed to implement, teach, and facilitate the Think and Life On Point programs. These programs are in alignment with the State of Georgia's goal to successfully implement and strengthen abstinence education and leadership programs for youth. [Click here](#) for more information or visit GOCF's Youth Development training page.

**To view all upcoming trainings and conferences that GOCF is currently sponsoring, [click here](#) or visit [www.children.ga.gov](http://www.children.ga.gov) and visit the training section.**